

# **ABOUT THIS GUIDE**

### Dear Educator,

This Activity Guide is designed to be used in conjunction with a unique book about the life and plays of William Shakespeare called **The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook**, published in association with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

On the six-foot-long Timeline, we present you with the complete works of William Shakespeare, using more than a thousand pictures and captions. Each play is being acted out within one of the boxes, or on the stage itself, in the iconic Globe Theatre. Each box contains a blurb, introducing the story, and a paragraph of text and key quotes to tell the beginning, middle, and end of the main plot. Beneath is a timeline showing the date when each play was written and what was happening during Shakespeare's lifetime. Can you see how many plays feature ghosts? How many have tragic endings? Which are based on true stories and which are made up?

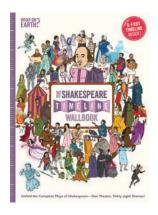
But there is so much more to this amazing book than meets the eye! It can be used in countless ways to help students connect knowledge together and develop their own critical thinking skills. This Activity Guide, which is aligned to Common Core Standards, suggests various ways of using The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook in class or as a curriculum-enrichment strategy.

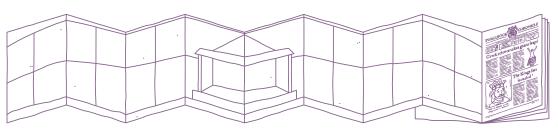
We hope you will have as much fun using these activities as we have had making them! If you have any ideas for more activities based on the using the Wallbook in class, then please feel free to email us at contactus@whatonearthbooks.com so that we can include them in future editions.

Very best wishes!

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Fold-out Timeline Wallbook

Chronicle

CONTENTS View of the second se			
INTRODUCTION	A Curiosity Manifesto!	3	
ACTIVITY 1	<b>Finding new words</b> Language Arts: Vocabulary	6	
ACTIVITY 2	<b>Diving deeper: extending the book with research and presentation</b> Language arts: Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, Critical Thinking, Speaking and Listening; Theater Arts	7	
ACTIVITY 3	<b>Identifying literary themes</b> Language Arts: Reading—Identifying Themes	8	
ACTIVITY 4	<b>Writing six-word memoirs</b> Language Arts: Writing, Critical Thinking; Art	10	
ACTIVITY 5	<b>Reporting on history</b> History; Language Arts: Writing, Research	11	
ACTIVITY 6	<b>Be the characters: creating and presenting period costumes</b> Language Arts: Reading, Speaking and Listening; Theater Arts; Cooperative Learning		
ACTIVITY 7	<b>Invite an expert to your classroom</b> Language Arts: Writing, Speaking and Listening; Cooperative Learning	13	
ACTIVITY 8	<b>Quiz time!</b> Language Arts: Research, Speaking and Listening; Cooperative Learning	14	

## **INTRODUCTION**

### A Curiosity Manifesto!

**Two things matter most when children launch into the world.** First, they must have a treasure trove of general knowledge; second, they must carry with them a lifelong love of learning.

The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook and the others in the Timeline Wallbook series from What on Earth Publishing are designed to help encourage your students to build both of those important life tools.

Introduce your students to William Shakespeare with The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook, a book that literally surrounds them with his thirty-eight plays. The colorful six-foot-long fold-out Timeline is packed with short summaries of each play, memorable lines, and illustrations that depict the settings, show actors in costumes, and delineate characters.

A concurrent sidebar running along the bottom of each page offers a miscellany of information about the playwright and his times. Students will discover the works of the man who many believe is the best playwright of our times—from what is considered his first play, *Henry VI Part I*, to the last play he wrote by himself, *The Tempest*, and his final play, *The Two Noble Kinsman*, co-written with John Fletcher in 1613.



What makes Shakespeare's plays eternal? The language, of course; and the Timeline Wallbook offers a generous taste of that. The plots are incredible, too, and the summaries will give your students a good sense of the various plots without going into details. Shakespeare's characters, whether kings or fools, historic characters or fabricated, comic or tragic, are like us or people we know. Your students will find characters with whom they can identify, emphasize, or sympathize. It is amazing that plays written four centuries ago keep such a hold on us. Shakespeare's plays also continue to inspire other works: music, ballets, movies, paintings, books, and other plays.

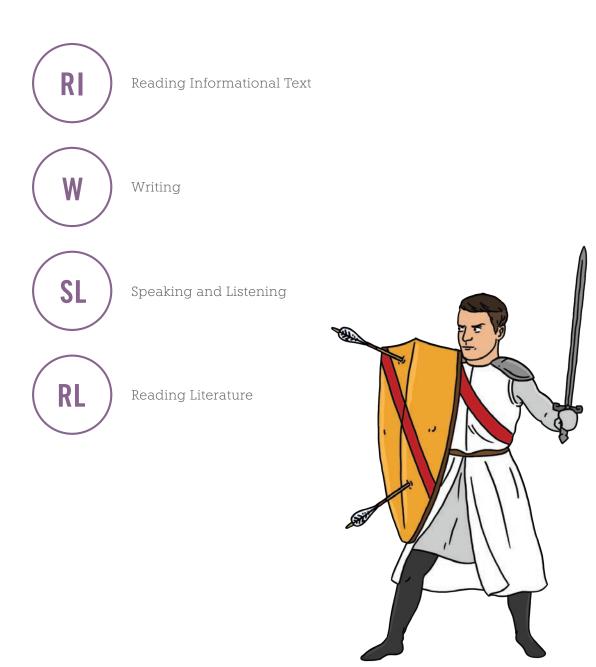
In addition, The Wallbook Chronicle offers more information about the Bard himself and his plays in articles as fresh as today's newspaper—from the report of his death (Curtain falls for Bard) to an article about Abraham Lincoln's fondness for Shakespeare (Artist tells how President leaped out of the frame) to a review of *West Side Story* (Stars crossed as West Side lovers take a tragic turn).

This guide offers activities that extend the learning, connect to the curriculum, and support Common Core State Standards. Curriculum ties are noted at the start of each activity, and Common Core Standards at the end of each activity.

Welcome your students to Elizabethan England when William Shakespeare was writing his plays. Enjoy the visit; you can always come back for more by reading the plays themselves.



### **COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS CODE**



#### **Finding new words**

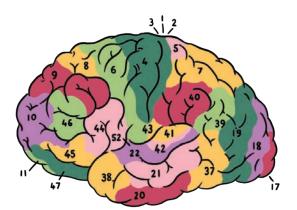
#### Language Arts: Vocabulary



The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook contains many words and phrases that your students will be encountering for the first time. As they scan through the Timeline and read articles, they should take note of unfamiliar words or phrases, putting each at the top of a 4x6 index card, followed by the sentence in which that word appears. On the back of the card, they should write what they think the word means based on how it is used in the sentence.

They can begin the speculation with the words: "I think the word means...." Next, they should look up the word in a dictionary and write down the definition. As a fun additional step and to cement the meaning of the words in their minds, they can write their own sentences using the words and quiz one another on their meanings. Cards should be alphabetized and kept in a Timeline Wallbook Vocabulary Box.

**RI:** 6.4



## Diving deeper: extending the book with research and presentation

**Language Arts:** Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, Critical Thinking, Speaking and Listening, Theater Arts



As your students read the synopses of William Shakespeare's plays, they will come across lines quoted from the plays. From *As You Like It*, for example, they will see one of the Bard's mostquoted lines: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." From *All's Well that Ends Well*, they will find a bit of philosophy: "Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie." And from *Two Gentlemen from Verona*, there is an example of Shakespeare's poetic use of language: "Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life!"

Each student should select three lines from any of the lines from Shakespeare's plays included in the Timeline. They should write a paragraph about each line saying how they think it relates to the play, what its broader meaning is, and why they chose it. Some students might want to extend the project, and for one of the lines, locate it in the play itself and explain it in context.

Digging deeper into Shakespeare's language and the many words and phrases he coined that are still in use today, students should select two phrases that are printed in banners, such as "Greek to me," from *Troilus and Cressida* and "band of brothers" from *Henry V*. Students should use these phrases in short dialogues they write—mini scenes for two actors. These scenes should be set in the present, not in Shakespeare's time, to show the way the phrases are used now. The students should set the scene and then perform the dialogue with a classmate.

**RL:** 6.1 / 6.2 / 6.3 / 6.4 / 6.5 / 6.7 / 6.9 **W:** 6.2 / 6.4 **SL:** 6.1 / 6.2 / 6.6

### Identifying literary themes

#### Language Arts: Reading—Identifying Themes



Your students will recognize recurring themes in Shakespeare's plays from reading the summaries in the Timeline.

They should keep a chart (see template) of those themes and corresponding plays. You can get them started with these categories: ghosts, lovers, revenge, betrayal, magic and enchantment, and mistaken identity. They should add new categories as they read the summaries.

RL: 6.1 / 6.2



THEMES	PLAYS (PARTIAL LIST)
GHOSTS	- Hamlet - Macbeth
LOVERS	- Romeo and Juliet - Midsummer Night's Dream - Much Ado About Nothing
REVENGE	- Richard III - Hamlet
BETRAYAL	
MAGIC AND ENCHANTMENT	
MISTAKEN IDENTITY	

### Writing six-word memoirs

### Language Arts: Writing, Critical Thinking Art



Your students may know how to express themselves in 140 characters on Twitter, but can they do the same in only six words? An activity from the National Writing Project demands just that: the six-word memoir. The six-word memoir teaches critical thinking and requires students to choose words precisely. The format of the memoirs is flexible: the words can make up a sentence or simply be a group of words that together express a thought or idea.

To get some practice, your students should write six-word memoirs for themselves. It can be about what they are doing now or what their hopes and aspirations are for the future. Then, after reading through The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook, each student should write two additional memoirs. The first is a six-word memoir for William Shakespeare and the other is for a character from one of his plays. The memoirs can be used as captions for pictures or superimposed on images.



### **Reporting on history**

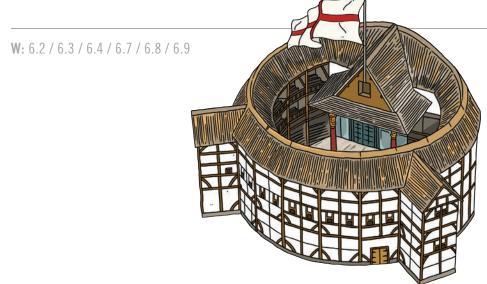
### Language Arts: Writing, Research History



Beginning in 1599, Shakespeare's plays were performed in the newly-built Globe Theatre. The Globe was designed to bring the play closer to the audience. There was no curtain and the stage extended out into the arena to be viewed on three sides.

The theatre eventually burnt down in 1613 and was rebuilt in 1614. It was closed permanently by a local ordinance in 1642. A replica of the Globe was constructed on the original site in 1997, and Shakespeare's plays are performed there once again. You and your students can learn more about the Globe Theatre by viewing short videos at: http://www.britannica.com/topic/Globe-Theatre

Each student should write an article for the Chronicle about the Globe. Some students might want to write about the fire that caused it to burn down, or the nature of the ordinance that shut it down in 1642, or about its reconstruction and how it is used today. In each case they can conduct imagined interviews with William Shakespeare, actors, audience members, Puritans, or modern-day observers—whichever characters would be appropriate to the time their article describes.



11 THE SHAKESPEARE TIMELINE ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS Activity 5–Reporting on history

## Be the characters: creating and presenting period costumes

Language Arts: Reading, Speaking and Listening, Theater Arts Cooperative Learning



Reading through the panels about Shakespeare's plays, your students can't help but notice the various types of characters. They'll see Roman Senators, monks, kings, queens, wenches, courtiers, soldiers, witches and wizards, musicians, and even a man wearing a donkey's head. All of these characters are in costume appropriate to the time period of the play.

Using the illustrations in the book as inspiration, have your students come to school dressed as a character or characters from one of Shakespeare's plays. They can do this either individually, in pairs or in small groups. Encourage your students' parents to get involved in helping to make the costumes.

Play a "Who am I?" game with your class where students have to guess their classmates' characters. Students should be prepared to explain the time/setting of the play, what character they are, and something about the character's relationship to others in the play. Afterward, they should parade through the school visiting other classes in their Shakespearean attire.



RL

SL

### Invite an expert to your classroom

Language Arts: Writing, Speaking and Listening Cooperative Learning Social Studies: History, Research

> Invite the drama teacher from your local high school, or an actor or director from the local community theater, to your class to talk to the students about putting on a Shakespearean play.

Before the visit, have your students study the Timeline and the Chronicle to figure out what to ask about how the plays are staged and performed. Encourage a wide array of questions, including about characterizations, Shakespearean language, elements of a tragedy, comedy, and/or romance, stage fighting, costumes, sets, make-up, animals on stage, and how the actors learn all those lines. If possible, ask your guest to recite a soliloquy from one of Shakespeare's plays or otherwise demonstrate their work.

To extend the project, students who are inspired by the visit could be encouraged to develop a project from it. One might try to learn a short soliloquy and perform it for the rest of the class. Another student might research how to make stage blood and give the rest of the class a chance to try it out. Another might create a diorama of a set design for one of the plays.

**RL:** 6.7 **SL:** 6.1 / 6.2 / 6.3 / 6.4 / 6.6

### Quiz time!

RL

W

SL

Language Arts: Research, Speaking and Listening Cooperative Learning Social Studies: History, Research

> At the end of The Shakespeare Timeline Wallbook, there are fifty "brain-teasing" questions. All of the answers can be found in the fold-out Timeline. For fairness to all of your students and to ensure that all of the questions are answered, have a lottery to see which student is responsible for answering particular questions. Write numbers from one to fifty on slips of paper.

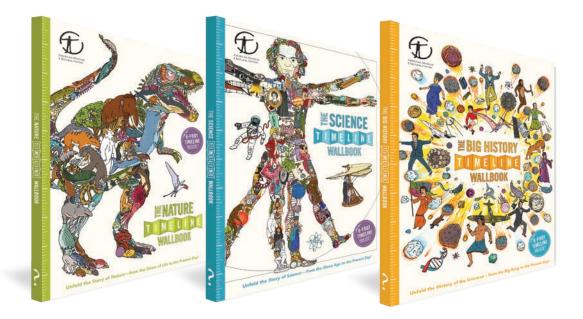
Each student will draw out two numbers. He/she will have to search through the Timeline for the answers to his/her questions. Students may wish to learn more about their assigned questions. Their answers should be presented to the entire class along with what they learned from further research. Presenters should be prepared to answer questions from their peers about the subject of their inquiry.

**RL:** 6.1 / 6.2 / 6.4 / 6.7 **W:** 6.2 / 6.4 **SL:** 6.1 / 6.2 / 6.3 / 6.4





### OTHER WHAT ON EARTH? TIMELINE WALLBOOKS



Nature

Science

**Big History** 

### All our timeline books are available wherever books are sold and at www.whatonearthbooks.com.

Each one has its own free-to-download Activity Guide, like this one.

We also produce giant highly-durable laminated **Posterbooks** editions specifically for use in classrooms. Please see our website for more details.

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